

Doorprizes this month

The Fleamarket Extravaganza is history for another year. Those of you who were there know that, although we had a plethora of doorprizes to give away, our expected donations from Amiga, Inc. never materialized in time for the show. Well... they did show up the following Tuesday. And Bill McEwen has agreed to let us keep the prizes and give them away at the monthly meetings instead. We will have five doorprizes at each of our chapter meetings this month. In addition to some posters, there will be one copy of the SDK (Software Developers Kit) for each meeting. See you there.

...Bill Raecke

Where is the Amiga headed?

I hope everyone got the chance to visit us at the Amigafest at Computerfest this year. While smaller in some ways than previous years' tests, it was also more ambitious, with scheduled seminars and demonstrations. Whether we do another Amigafest next year is in doubt, in no small part due to the waiting around for Amiga (and its related third party producers) to have product, and the following discovery of whether that product will be worth our time and money.

It got me to thinking a bit regarding the nature of the computer market. Actually, I seem to repeat this every once in a while, but it's seemingly relevant when

it's a market Amiga seeks to re-enter. When the original Amiga was first introduced in 1985, there were a lot fewer computers in the world, and the majority of them were Commodore 64's and similar machines. Back then, a home computer was more of a useful novelty or toy than a necessary tool, in the sense that parents would buy computers for kids to "do their homework" on, and the child would play games. The computer would be used occasionally to write a letter or balance a checkbook, but it wasn't any more indispensable than a typewriter, calculator, or video game console. Sales were determined mostly by flashy capabilities, and the apparent amount of available software.

Back then, the Amiga was king of flash and capability, if not software. It attracted those with an interest in graphics and games, as well as the people who revel in technology for its own sake. A few years later, the IBM-compatibles became a dominant force, based in part on the idea that someone could take their work home with them, and use a similar system at home (though it may have been more of an excuse to steal software from work). Amigas were a force in the market, mostly for the sake that they could offer near or better capabilities to their PC and Mac competitors for a much lower price. While they couldn't necessarily offer the big names or quantities in software, they

offered the options, which were sometimes better than the big names. The "technology for its own sake" market was dying out, and being replaced with applications and fields for usage, such as business software for the PC's, desktop publishing and print graphics for the Mac, and Video, graphics and, to a lesser extent, games on the Amiga. If Commodore had been better at catering to the niches they had footholds in, they might be more successful (not to mention alive) today. As always, computer sales came from flash, capabilities, and available software, with a growing trend toward simple numeric measurement of CPU megahertz, megs or gigs of hard drive space, and whatnot.

Nowadays, mostly due to dropping out of the market for a long time, the Amiga has no real place in it. Other systems have surpassed it in the price vs. Power ratio, leaving Amiga loyalists to talk about the efficiency and superiority of our operating system, and other less tangible qualities. The Windows systems, which offer insane specs at reasonable prices, along with more software than you could possibly ask for, rule the roost — understandably. In the marketplace, computers are no longer useful toys — they are simply tools — a means to run the software people need or a conduit to the internet. People no longer see a market that offers real choices. It's not

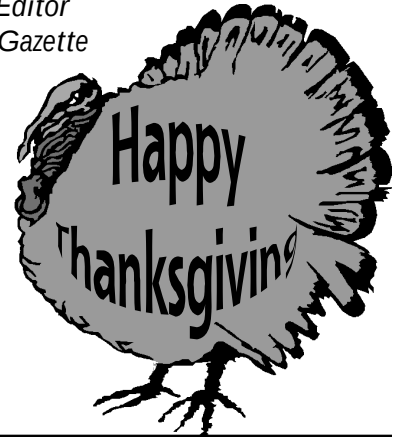
PC, Mac, or Amiga — it's Windows PC by Hewlett-Packard, Sony, or whatever (and possibly an I-Mac if you're lucky).

It's a difficult market to break into when, before you can convince people your system is better, you have to convince them it's different from a Windows machine. It's no wonder Amiga have split their focus in as many directions as they have. They're trying to find the means to survive in a market with built-in persecution. Bringing us something the Amiga users would like is secondary — unless they are the means for survival. It remains to be seen whether Amiga needs its "classic" users more or less than we need them, or whether the market will allow us all in

either way.

I want an inexpensive PPC Amiga, and hope there's enough out there like me to make it worthwhile.

*...Eric W. Schwartz, Editor
Dayton Area Amiga Gazette
Dayton, Ohio
September, 2001*



AmigaMCCC News

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November Calendar

Nov 12 — Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
7:30 pm — N.Richland Hills Community Ctr.
Loop 820 at Rufe Snow, N.Richland Hills

Nov 12 — MCCC Board of Director's Meeting
Approx. 10:00 pm — TGI Friday's
Loop 820 & Bedford Euless Road

Nov 15 — Amiga North Dallas Chapter
7:30 pm — SMU Building
Collins Blvd. & International Pkwy, Richardson

Nov 24 — Newsletter Deadline — 7:00 am

Editor's Comments

Another slow month. There just isn't a lot going on right now. I keep waiting for the release of the Amiga One computers. That should be soon now. Until then, I guess we'll all keep waiting.

On the website this month you'll find pictures of our latest Fleamarket Extravaganza. Attendance was down this year. That seems to be a trend everywhere in the Amiga community. We need something new. Minor upgrades to the OS, although better than nothing, just aren't enough.

...Bill Raecke